

NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 1-9898
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CAMBODIA'S NEW CONSTITUTION

ANNCR:

CAMBODIA HAS ADOPTED A NEW CONSTITUTION WHICH LAYS DOWN STRICT REQUIREMENTS FOR ITS POPULATION AND A RIGIDLY INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY. VOA'S EDWARD CONLEY HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS:

TEXT:

UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION, IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL OF CAMBODIA'S POPULATION TO DEFEND AND BUILD THE COUNTRY TOGETHER, UNDER A COLLECTIVE SYSTEM IN WHICH ALL MEANS OF PRODUCTION ARE THE PROPERTY OF A PEOPLE'S STATE.

THE DOCUMENT PROVIDES FOR THE ELECTION OF A PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL APPOINT OR ELECT EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL BODIES, PLUS A THREE MAN PRESIDIUM COMPOSED OF A PRESIDENT AND FIRST AND SECOND VICE PRESIDENTS. THE TERM OF OFFICE FOR ASSEMBLY MEMBERS IS FIVE YEARS, TO BE FOLLOWED BY NEW ELECTIONS. NO CONSTITUTIONAL RESTRICTIONS SEEM TO BE PLACED ON CAMBODIA'S MILITARY, WHICH IS CALLED UPON TO DEFEND THE STATE POWER OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE... DEFEND THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE COUNTRY...AND, CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHAT IS NOW CALLED DEMOCRATIC CAMBODIA. ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY HAS ONLY TWENTY PERCENT REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, IT APPEARS IT WILL HAVE MUCH TO SAY INCARRYING OUT THE LAWS OF CAMBODIA. THOSE LAWS, SPOKEN OF IN GENERAL TERMS IN THE CONSTITUTION, INDICATE THERE WILL BE NO LETUP IN THE

STRICT HOLD ON THE PEOPLE IMPOSED AFTER THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER OF CAMBODIA LAST APRIL.

ACCORDING TO THE CONSTITUTION: ACTIVITIES REGARDED AS DANGEROUS AND IN OPPOSITION TO THE PEOPLE'S STATE MUST BE CONDEMNED TO THE HIGHEST DEGREE. LESSER VIOLATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO WHAT IS CALLED CONSTRUCTIVE EDUCATION. WHILE CAMBODIANS ARE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO WORSHIP OR NOT TO WORSHIP ANY RELIGION, THE COUNTRY'S NEW CONSTITUTION ABSOLUTELY FORBIDS WHAT IS TERMED RELIGION DETRIMENTAL TO DEMOCRATIC CAMBODIA AND THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE.

THE CONSTITUTION MAKES CLEAR CAMBODIA WANTS TO CARRY OUT ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE WHICH, IT NOTES, COULD COME IN THE GUISE OF POLITICAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, DIPLOMATIC OR HUMANITARIAN CONTACT. THE NEW DOCUMENT STATES THAT CAMBODIA'S NEW RULERS WANT FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS AND DISTANT NATIONS, BASED ON ABSOLUTE RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. NO FOREIGN MILITARY BASES WILL BE PERMITTED IN CAMBODIA, WHICH IN TURN WILL NOT INTERFERE IN OTHER NATIONS' AFFAIRS.

IT APPEARS THAT THE AS YET UNNAMED DRAFTERS AND ENFORCERS OF THE COUNTRY'S NEW CONSTITUTION HAVE DECIDED TO MAINTAIN THE TOUGH INTERNAL DISCIPLINE AND REMOTE INTERNATIONAL STANCE ADOPTED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE FALL OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC IN APRIL, NINETEEN SEVENTY-FIVE.

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